REMARKS

In the September 11, 2003 Office Action, the Examiner noted that claims 1-29 were pending in the application and were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,404,743 to Meandzija (Reference A) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,987,514 to Rangarajan (Reference B). Claims 1-29 remain in the case. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below.

The Application

The subject application is directed to a system for processing state information in a management network having different management levels in which a request message for performing state realignment is sent to an agent at a management level by a manager of a next-higher management level. Upon receiving the request message, the agent checks for state information with regard to deviations from a normal state and sends changes in the state information to the manager in one or a plurality of successive messages.

The Prior Art

U.S. Patent No. 6,404,753 to Meandzija

Meandzija patent is directed to an enhanced Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) for network and systems management. According to the disclosure, all reporting from agents 130, 140, 150 (Fig. 1) to management station 110 is based on "event information defining pre-conditions for generating an event" (e.g., column 4, lines 58-59) or when event forwarding discriminator (EFD) "pre-conditions have been met" (e.g., column 6, lines 17-18). While there is a general statement that the "SNMP management agent 130, 140, 150 ... respond to requests for actions from the management station 110" (column 10, lines 3-6) the only mechanism described for responding to requests is generating notifications of events in response to pre-conditions. The only other mention of sending information to the management station that has been found is that the "management agents may also sequentially provide the management station 110 with important unsolicited information" (column 10, lines 6-8).

U.S. Patent No. 5,987,514 to Rangarajan

Rangarajan is directed to a system and method for advanced event request manage-ment for networks using SNMP with at least one mid-level manager "that receives event requests from the network manager" (column 3, lines 41-42) and has "the value of the requested attribute from the MIB" associated with the device ... forwarded to" (column 3, lines 53-55) it by a

low-level agent. "An event request is a request that directs the mid-level manager to poll a device during a prescribed interval to ascertain an attribute of the device against one or more error conditions" (column 2, lines 25-28). Like Meandzija, "[w]hen the attribute of a device satisfies a condition specified in one of the event requests 82, an event is generated in the form of an event report that is transmitted to the network manager 48" (column 5, lines 50-53).

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

In item 21 on pages 2-8 of the Office Action, claims 1-29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Meandzija in view of Rangarajan. As described above, there is a basic difference between the method of communication between agents and managers according to the present invention and that described in Meandzija and Rangarajan. Both Meandzija and Rangarajan send messages from the manager to the agents to pre-define conditions under which an event notification will be generated by the agents and sent to the manager. This results in a considerable amount of information being sent from the agents to the manager. Depending upon the number and type of events that have been pre-defined, there may be a significant amount of network communication taken up with notifications which are not critical to the manager. This is compounded by the suggestion in Rangarajan that "polling should be performed at regular intervals of 60 seconds" (column 7, lines 33-34).

Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to clarify that state information is transmitted "between an agent of one management level and a manager of a next-higher management level for a state realignment upon request of said manager" (claim 1, lines 4-6) or " upon receiving the request message" (claim 17, line 9) sent by "a manager of a next-higher management level ... for performing state realignment to said agent" (claim 17, lines 4-6). While Rangarajan discloses that the "network manager 48 can ... respond to the event . . . [by stopping] the mid-level mana-ger 40-45 from polling the attribute of the device" (column 5, lines 57-59, "[t]his action, in turn, stops additional events from being generated" (column 5, line 60-62), thus stopping the flow of information until polling resumes. In addition, full information is obtained by repeated requests for further information (see column 5, line 64 to column 6, line 8). The present invention, on the other hand, issues a single request to an agent to receive "changes in said state information" (claims 1 and 17, next to last line) "in one or more successive messages" (claim 1, last 2 lines with similar language at the end of claim 17). This significantly reduces the amount of network traffic required, compared to the methods taught by Meandzija and Rangarajan.

Since claims 2-16 depend from claim 1 and claims 18-29 depend from claim 17, it is submitted that claims 1-29 patentably distinguish over <u>Meandzija</u> in view of <u>Rangarajan</u> for reasons set forth above.

Summary

It is submitted that the references cited by the Examiner, taken individually or in combination, do not teach or suggest the features of the present claimed invention. Thus, it is submitted that claims 1-29 are in a condition suitable for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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